



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

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Cruise ship makes welcome stop in Whitsundays

The sun was shining, the sky was blue and it couldn't have been a better welcome for P&O Cruises' Pacific Dawn - the first cruise ship to visit the Whitsundays since Tropical Cyclone Debbie.

Around 2,000 passengers were greeted with a carnival atmosphere as they came ashore on Thursday (April 13) with live music, smiling ambassadors and the welcome mat well and truly out.

In a gesture of goodwill and support for the Whitsunday region, which hosts 30 P&O cruise ship calls each year, the P&O Pacific Partnership donated \$10,000 to the cyclone recovery efforts.

Tourism Whitsundays CEO Craig Turner said the support from Carnival Australia, which operates P&O Cruises, was "unbelievable".

"We can't thank P&O and Carnival Australia enough for supporting us," he said. "They called us and said, we want to come to the Whitsundays, and for them to turn up with this amazing gift of \$10,000 - I think this is the start of an incredible relationship.

"It's onwards and upwards for the Whitsundays and we are delighted at what Carnival Australia has done for us.

"This Easter weekend we are seeing really good numbers for both accommodation and tour providers and we see this as the start of our traditionally busy period."

Executive chairman of Carnival Australia Ann Sherry said it was fitting that the Brisbane-based Pacific Dawn was the first cruise ship to return to the Whitsundays.

"The Whitsundays community has been quick to get back on its feet and P&O is pleased to play a role in reviving the visitor economy," she said.

This month, 6,000 P&O guests will arrive in the Whitsundays on Pacific Dawn's three scheduled calls, on April 13, 17 and 27. An estimated \$250,000 is injected into the local economy from each visit.

For more information about holidays in the Whitsundays visit www.tourismwhitsundays.com.au or call Tourism Whitsundays on (07) 4948 5900.

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